

## Iowa e-Health Connection

A monthly e-newsletter on the progress of health information technology and the health information exchange in Iowa



A collaboration to provide better information for better care.

### Executive Director Update

Welcome to the February edition of the Iowa e-Health Connection! The beginning of 2012 has been incredibly busy, but we have already accomplished several noteworthy milestones. On January 12-13 ACS joined us in Iowa to officially kick off the Iowa Health Information Network (IHIN) Project. ACS, along with their subcontracting organizations and the Iowa e-Health team, met with some of our largest stakeholder organizations to begin discussions about specific project activities, milestones, and deadlines. It was an exciting two-day event that helped us further clarify how we will successfully develop and implement the IHIN.

Additionally, January brought about the start of the 2012 Iowa legislative session. Deborah Thompson recently joined the public health team as our new policy advisor and we are very lucky to have Deborah helping this year. Many thanks to Beth Jones for her help last year. The Iowa e-Health bill has been introduced in the Senate as SSB 3056 and in the House as HSB 561. Iowa Department of Public Health Director Dr. Miller-Meeks presented information about Iowa e-Health and the IHIN to House Human Resources Committee on January 17th, where a number of good questions were posed. On Thursday the 26th, Deborah and I attended the Senate Human Resources subcommittee meeting which was focused on the e-Health bill. At this meeting, we received some positive feedback that reflects on the hard work by the e-Health team, IDPH, and the Iowa e-Health collaborative. In particular, we received some very nice compliments about how well-prepared we are. Comments like these, along with the quick activity and thoughtful responses to the e-Health bill, are encouraging and I am hopeful for passage of the bill during this legislative session.

I hope you find this and more of the information provided in the Iowa e-Health Connection beneficial.

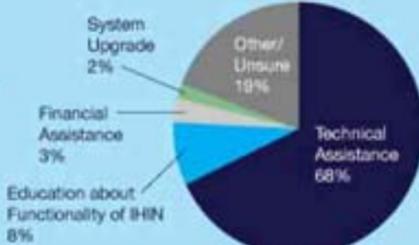
-- Kim Norby, Iowa e-Health Executive Director

### Calendar

- February 9: Iowa e-Health e-Prescribing Subcommittee, 2-3pm, via Conference Call
- February 10: Iowa e-Health Executive Committee & Advisory Council, 10:00am-2:00pm, Urbandale Public Library
- February 15: Iowa e-Health Privacy & Security Workgroup Conference Call, 1:00-2:00pm
- February 17: Iowa e-Health Evaluation Workgroup Conference Call, 9:00-10:00am
- February 29: Iowa e-Health Privacy & Security Workgroup Conference Call, 1:00-2:00pm

### Iowa Providers Indicate Need for Preparation before IHIN Connection

Iowa e-Health IHIN Participation Survey, 2011



### Iowa e-Health By the Numbers

Iowa providers are preparing to connect to the Iowa Health Information Network (IHIN). However, prior to connection, many preparations need to be completed. According to respondents to the Iowa e-Health IHIN Participation Interest Survey (August–December, 2011), 68% noted a significant need for technical assistance (technical specifications, file testing, system interoperability, etc.). Providers also indicated their need for education about the functionality of the IHIN (8%), financial assistance (3%), and system upgrades (2%) prior to connecting to the IHIN. Nearly 20% of those surveyed revealed they were unsure about the preparations needed prior to IHIN connection.

Over the coming months, Iowa e-Health will be publishing several "Connectivity Guides" on the Iowa e-Health website that are intended to help providers bridge the gap to HIE connectivity. Additionally, providers should make plans to attend this year's e-Health Summit, August 8-9, 2012 at Prairie Meadows Events & Conference Center in Altoona, Iowa. It will be a great opportunity to learn about how you and your organization can prepare for connection to the IHIN.

### Provider Spotlight: Susan M. Kennedy, D.O., Mercy Clinic, Des Moines



Dr. Susan Kennedy sees approximately 30 patients every day, including many she's never treated before and chronically ill patients who see a variety of physicians every year. Yet, she has the ability to access up-to-date health records for nearly every one of them on her tablet computer in the office, hospital or at home. In September 2011, Kennedy and the other physicians at Mercy Clinics completed the transition from paper to electronic health records that can be accessed by providers throughout Mercy's Des Moines area facilities. She also is able to access records from a rapidly growing number of specialists.

"It has helped a lot in terms of patient care," Kennedy says. "As far as diagnoses, you don't have to wait for the specialist report because it's there, and you can make decisions on the spot."

Kennedy is a strong proponent of the Iowa Health Information Network, a statewide system scheduled to launch later this year that will allow all connected providers to access patients' electronic health records. It is something she wishes health care providers had years ago when her son, Jack, suffered an asthma attack when the family visited Dubuque.

"His medical record was locked up in my office in Des Moines. It would have been nice to be able to access those records in Dubuque," she said.

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### Health Information Technology Incentives Hold Potential to Cut Medicaid Costs, Improve Outcomes

Iowans are investing nearly \$1.2 billion to provide health and dental care for Medicaid clients throughout the state. But a tiny fraction, \$29 million, may be Iowa Medicaid's best investment.

Those funds have been paid out in incentives to more than 400 doctors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other health care providers to help them implement electronic health records systems and put those systems to meaningful use in managing patient care. Another 200 provider applications for incentives are awaiting approval.

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### 2012 E-Health Summit Aug. 8-9

The 8th Annual Iowa e-Health Summit will be held August 8-9, 2012, at the Prairie Meadows Events & Conference Center in Altoona, Iowa. Iowa's premier health information technology summit is sponsored by Telligent, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise, and Iowa e-Health. It will be an event you won't want to miss, so make plans to attend! See the SAVE THE DATE reminder and add this event to your calendar. More information will follow.

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### Update: e-Prescribing Controlled Substance in Iowa

Although the rule enacted by the Board of Pharmacy on January 18 was an important step toward enabling the electronic prescribing of controlled substances, there is still more work to do to move toward full implementation. In the meantime, here are some important points for those interested in electronically prescribing Schedule II through Schedule V controlled medications. E-prescribing of controlled substances will not begin immediately. Several barriers still exist on that front.

1. Prescribers must use an e-prescribing application (software) that is certified compliant with requirements of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).
2. Prescribers must complete a compliant identity-proofing process.
3. Prescribers must use a secure, two-factor authentication process to sign prescriptions for controlled substances.
4. Retail pharmacies must go through a certification process to receive e-prescriptions for controlled substances.

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### Iowa's Regional Extension Center Update

The Telligent Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center (REC) assists Iowa primary care providers and critical access/rural hospitals with the meaningful use of electronic health records. The REC achieved 100 percent of their provider recruitment goal by surpassing 1,200 priority primary care provider sign ups in December 2012. The REC has signed 1,287 priority primary care providers and 71 critical access/rural hospitals as of January 26, 2012.

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### New Health Information Technology Resource Targets Rural Health Providers

A new online toolkit will serve as a pilot program for providing health information technology (HIT) resources to rural health care providers. The toolkit, developed by the Rural Assistance Center (RAC) and the National Rural Health Resource Center is designed to help rural providers find resources for HIT, electronic health records (EHR), meaningful use and related topics. Funding for the toolkit, available at <http://www.raconline.org/hit/>, is provided by the federal Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP).

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